

Sight & Sound

By Ernest Kreiling

HOLLYWOOD—as the now fading TV season was racing by I frequently find myself being impressed with the quality of new and young dramatic talent appearing in supporting roles in many of the weekly series.

And I couldn't help but wonder where these new faces came from, and how they got their start in a difficult career in a difficult town, Hollywood. To learn something of the wellsprings of acting talent I called on Ruth Burch, a charming, articulate, and sensitive woman who watches the ebb and flow of talent in Hollywood from the vantage point of being a top casting director.

AFTER FIVE years with David O. Selznick, she has recently been an independent casting director, casting, among others, the Dick Van Dyke, Danny Thomas, and Andy Griffith programs.

"There's always room at the top," she said, "and although it might be hard for newcomers to believe it, we are always looking for new talent."

Miss Burch spends two mornings a week auditioning new and unknown talent in this search to find those who can fill a spot at the top.

"It's been easier for men in recent years," she commented, "with probably eight male roles available for every female role, due to the proliferation of the westerns."

"BUT WHEN anyone finally bursts upon the public scene, you can usually bet he or she has been around a long time in small parts in movies, TV, or the stage."

Mary Tyler Moore, who added a special dimension to the Dick Van Dyke program that wasn't anticipated in the original scripts, is a good example.

Miss Moore had worked for a number of years in radio and in small TV parts without establishing her name with the public or with producers.

She achieved an almost anonymous reputation a few years ago, however, as the voice and legs of Sam, Richard Diamond's telephone answering service operator.

Although something of a "find" this year as Van Dyke's TV wife, like many stars she's actually a professional with hard years of work and training behind her.

SOME LEGENDS have the casting director as an omnipotent person in the enviable position of whimsically dispensing personal favors to friends. It's doubtful that the competitiveness and speed of today's TV would support such an approach to casting.

For example, Miss Burch interviewed more than 100 children before she and Carl Reiner decided upon Larry Mathews to play Dick Van Dyke's son, Ritchie.

The first step in casting a role, of course, is to read the script. And herein probably lies much of the secret of good casting. It takes a sharp and sensitive literary eye to pick out of the cold typewritten page exactly the qualities called for in the part, and equally as subtle a feeling to relate those qualities to the actors available to play the role.

AFTER STUDYING the script, Ruth Burch compiles a list of prospects for the role, both from her own memory and experience and from several actor's directories. Then the producer and director add their own names, before they start to shave the list down to workable size. Then much depends on who is available on the dates they are needed and on the salaries asked by the actors or their agents.

"But throughout the process," Miss Burch said, "there's always an eye out for new talent who might fill the role better."

Meet Bruinsma Night Slated By Teenagers

The Teen-Age Republicans of Torrance are sponsoring a "Meet Ted Bruinsma" night at the Torrance High School auditorium on May 15, at 8 p.m.

Bruinsma will be the main speaker and will be introduced by Jud Leathan, chairman of the Republican Committee of Los Angeles. The meeting will be open to the public.

Farm, Home Improvement Stand Lauded

Adoption of a liberalized farm and home improvement loans policy and a resolution commending the Legislature on its passage of the Veterans Bond Act, were the highlights of action taken at the recent meeting of the California Veterans Board in Lancaster.

"The Department of Veterans Affairs has received many requests for farm and home loans to improve existing facilities," said Lim P. Lee, chairman, "and our policy in the past has been that the department may advance such funds to meet qualified needs. The policy has now been changed to state that the department shall advance such funds for

improvements. This action will provide the qualified farm or home owner the opportunity to add living area necessary to meet the health and comfort requirements."

COUPLED with this policy decision, the Director of Veterans Affairs, Joseph M. Farber, made an administrative change which raised ceilings on such improvement loans from \$3,500 to \$4,000. "Our department has recognized the need for these loans," Farber added, "and it is our intent to give assistance as long as funds permit. The basic intent, of course, is to use the existing moneys to meet the initial requests for

the purchase of a farm or home.

"However, improvement loans are also needed to give the veteran the required space to house a family that has increased during the loan period."

UNANIMOUS approval was given by the Board to the adoption of a resolution citing certain members of the Legislature for their endorsement and support of the 1962 Veterans Bond Act. The resolution summarized the assistance rendered by the State through the previous bond acts, then continued to commend Gov. Edmund G. Brown, Assemblymen

Cactus Society Plans Friday Night Meeting

Members of the Metropolitan Cactus and Succulent Society will hear Marjorie Sewell, Southern California Gas Co., speak on the subject, "Teach Yourself to Wonder," when they meet at 8 Friday evening at the Women's Progressive Club, 3727 Y.W. 111th Place, Inglewood.

Ronald Brooks Cameron, Carl A. Britschgi, Jerome R. Waldie, Paul J. Lundardi, and Senators John C. Begovich and J. Eugene McAteer, and other members of the Assembly and Senate for their advancement of the "legislation of great importance to the veterans of California."

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THE TORRANCE HERALD

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Toastmaster Sets Pattern

Enthusiasm was the keynote of Southbay Toastmaster's Club 280's recent evening meeting. Guest speaker John Lane of Westchester set the pace with the speech he is to make in the Toastmaster's Area Finals, and the local club members followed John's enthusiastic lead.

The early portion of the meeting was devoted to training in parliamentary procedure, led by Dr. Robert Seaman of Manhattan Beach, who has been past district council governor and long associated with Toastmastering activities.

The formal portion of the program led off with a speech by Don Payne who spoke on safety as related to his profession. Richard Squire of Hermosa Beach followed with a discourse on "Let the Public Know" and went home with the first prize of the evening.

Information regarding the Southbay Toastmaster's regular Wednesday evening meeting held at the Redondo Beach Elks Club may be had by calling Dr. W. J. Labit at FR 5-3611.

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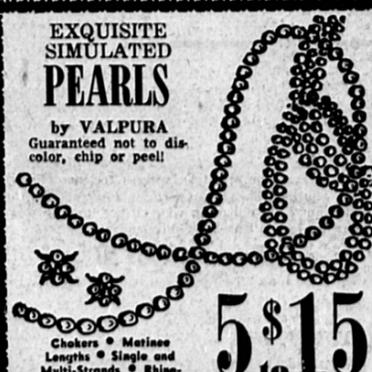
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